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"Royalty Free Stock Footage - 8 Things You Need to Know Before Buying", "We all realize that stock footage is a real time saver for video production. Besides choosing the right video content, one should also consider these 8 important things before buying your footage:

1. Royalty free: Always opt for royalty free stock footage so that your usage is not restricted to the number of projects or release locations for a one-time licensing fee.

2. Delivery Format: Stock footage is occasionally delivered in one of the following formats:

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<ul>
<li>Standard Definition: NTSC or PAL</li>
  <li>High Definition: HD 1080p, 1080i, HD 720p.</li>
  <li>Multimedia or Web ( non-broadcast standard ): 320x240 or 640 x 480.</li>
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The format that best suits your work will depend on your destination and resolution of your playback. If you are not sure or are promised to use the stock footage in other playback formats, then absolutely go for High Definition Progressive ( HD 1080p or HD 720p ). they may cost slightly more, but their picture quality will hold up better after format conversion or image manipulation because they are non-interlaced and high resolution. Of course, you can also use them in high definition projects as well.

3. Source: Many stock footage providers in the market claim to deliver several video formats, but are actually converted from one main native source. confirm the footage source. If you purchase an NTSC clip converted from a PAL source (or vice versa), then you are not getting quality video. make absolutely sure the stock footage video you are buying is from a similar or higher resolution source.

4. Compression Method: Stock footage delivered via download occasionally employs some sort of compression to keep file size manageable. Quicktime photograph JPEG compression codec is fast becoming a standard for digital delivery. This compression codec, when compressed from 75 to 90 %, gives the best quality without visible losses while also keeping file size manageable.

5. Alpha Matte: Alpha Matte is a black and white (256 grey scale) image used to isolate a certain section of a video frame in a compositing applications, so that you can easily replace its background. This is especially important if you are purchasing a clip for its foreground element only. Alpha Mattes are often available in 3D animated stock footage, as well as chroma key video, offered by many web sites.

6. Model Release: If your stock footage contains recognizable faces, and you intend to use the clip for commercial purpose, be sure the clip comes with a Model Release, a document signed by the person recognized in the clip that gives the buyer the right to use the clip. However, for editorial footage (that is, footage that is newsworthy or has documentary value), model releases are not often required.

7. Property Release: Similarly, if your stock footage contains a recognizable property and you intend to use the clip for commercial purposes, make sure the clip comes with a Property Release from the property owner.

8. File Size and Broadband: What's the point of having all these checks in place if you don't have the extra bandwidth to download them? make certainly sure you have a broadband Internet connection. Always check the file size of the footage you intend to download against the Internet speed you have, as High Definition or long footages can easily go up to a few hundred megabytes in size. In many cases, you can still buy your stock footage online and have the stock footage provider ship them straight to your location, incurring a shipping cost and a few days of delay.

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